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THE BIRTH OF A PARTY

by John Temple Graves

"We do not believe that [Northern] minority groups hold the decisive power", declared a recent resolution of States' Rights Democrats. This was adopted at a recent dinner in Dothan, Alabama, which had to be turned into four separate dinners to accommodate the unexpected crowd.

"We have lately had encouragement", this declaration continued, "which has made us confident that the large majority of average Americans are awakening to the danger inherent in the 'total State'. We believe that States' Rights is the best weapon presently available with which we may oppose this danger . . ."

The resolution then made what could be a history-turning gesture:

> "The States' Rights movement, by its own nature, must not be a sectional affair. We declare that we will join hands with any national group or party which sincerely embraces States' Rights and Constitutional government. We declare that principle is above any party. We invite all Americans to work with us."

Political philosophers who believe that revolutionary new national political line-ups are coming, naturally and inevitably, may well look to developments like these in the South for confirmation. Southern emancipation from blind loyalty to the national Democratic organization is evolving not only as a result of the Democratic Party's capture of the Northern Negro vote, with all the cajoleries and concessions that involves, but also because of the capture of the nation's textile industry by the South.

In the past these states have been solidly Democratic because (1) that party could be counted on for protection against Federal interference in the most delicate and difficult race problem with which any people anywhere ever had to deal, and (2) the Democratic Party has stood for free trade, and the South, as an agricultural region, selling great percentages of its cotton and tobacco abroad, has looked upon tariffs as an interference with trade and a potent factor in high living costs.

Today, with Democratic and Republican parties competing for organized Negro minorities in large pivotal states, finding that vote more to be desired than the vote of the South, Southerners no longer have any more reason for voting Democratic than Republican on that score.

Simultaneously, 85 per cent of the textile manufacturing industry has established itself in the South, deserting New England, and now con-

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stitutes the biggest single economic activity in the Southern states, not excepting cotton growing itself. This is giving the South two minds, like the rest of the country, on tariff protection.

Both situations make the South more willing to break with, or within, the Democratic Party than ever before. The two do not necessarily influence the same groups, and the race issue, of course, is more passionate and emotionally compelling than the tariff.

II

In the significant Senate filibuster during the early days of the present Congress, disciples of Strom Thurmond followed the lead of Senator Russell, of Georgia. These two men may be said to be the only ones with actual mandates from the South as a whole -- Thurmond, for whom more than a million Southerners voted last November, and Russell, to whom all of the Southern delegates who didn't walk out at Philadelphia gave their ballots in protest against the Humphrey Resolution and what they call the "Federal force" proposals of President Truman.

If you put the Thurmond and Russell forces together, as they were on the filibuster fight, and are generally on Labor legislation, you have a group holding a definite balance of power. This has been obvious time and again, notably in Mr. Truman's failure on repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act.

Joined with the Taft wing of the Republican Party, to most of whose philosophy the South subscribes, this alliance represents so nearly half the country that if it isn't half already a good push could put it over. Yet neither the Southerners nor Senator Taft are comfortable in the developing kinship.

Senator Taft is a brave man politically but how can he run for re-election in Ohio next year, with the bitter fight being organized against him, and yet dare to be identified with Southerners who "filibuster against civil liberty"?

Senator Russell, not so brave as Taft politically, would certainly not dare to run in Georgia as ally of a Republican, if he had to do it next year. But since Russell was re-elected last year and has five years in which history could make all things right, enthusiasts for the coalition are picking him as the natural one to give open recognition to the alignment against what Southerners regard as Federalism-gone-mad, Socialism-come-creeping and Labor unionism turned Fascist.

The alignment would have to be able to "contain" the South on the race question, not conceding all the Southern viewpoint but recognizing

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the States' Rights principle sufficiently to leave the question to local determination. The political feasibility of this is increased by the broadening views of Southern leaders on entitlements of the Negro.

That the race problem could indeed be so contained is suggested in the fact that the civil liberties proposal most objectionable to the South -- the Fair Employment Practices Commission -- is opposed as strongly by Senator Taft. He opposes it out of no sympathy with Southern feeling, but seemingly because a Federal FEPC would be an un-Constitutional and intolerable piling of another mountain of bureaucratic debris on the mountain already there.

III

Dimly, and in such devious ways as these, the course of events seems to be giving birth to a political party devoted to the proposition that representative government and centrally-planned economy are incompatible, and the intimately related proposition that democracy and a strongly centralized government are also incompatible. A membership for such a party exists, even if the party itself does not.

Because of the race question, the South has more passion for these propositions than any other part of the country. But, also because of the race question, the South is still heavily weighed down by its tradition for voting Democratic and never breaking ranks. That is why many believe that the proving ground is in these states and that what happens in the South is more important now than what happens anywhere else.

The personification of over-centralized government, for the South, is Senator Humphrey, who forced the extreme civil liberties proposals into the Democratic platform. The personification of the too controlling government is Mr. Justice Douglas, whose statement to the CIO that the "Human Welfare State is the great invention of the Twentieth Century" made a most unfavorable impression in a South which sees itself the main CIO target in an all-out move for both political and economic control with the blessing of the Truman Administration. The prospect of either Senator Humphrey or Justice Douglas as a Presidential candidate in 1952 is a spur to Southern interest in coalition.

An obstacle in the path of this new national political line-up is the impression given a great many Americans that the States' Rights movement in the South is nothing but race hate in political action, and is a sort of political first cousin to the Klan.

This belief persists in spite of the fact that the Klan is strongest in the only Deep South state which failed to give its electoral vote

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to Thurmond -- Georgia -- and that States' Rights leaders have been as emphatic in repudiation of the hooded order as they were in rejecting the proferred support of Gerald L. K. Smith. Strangely, some Upper South editors have outdone those in other parts of the country in low-rating the States' Rights movement, even though it would probably have won Virginia and North Carolina if it had been born in, say, Maryland, rather than in Alabama and Mississippi. And a certain type of so-called "nation-minded" Southerner, who is actually National Socialist minded, has made the movement an occasion for unlimited fouling of his Southern nest with false witness.

IV

Genuine new political parties come from the creeks and inlets and grass roots, existing dimly and in potential membership before actual organization is achieved or should be attempted. States' Righters in the South are determined to be opportunists in the 1950 Congressional elections, holding fast to Democratic areas where they are in command, being independents where indicated, and learning not to wince at the word Republican any more. They will stress their two principles -- free economy and home rule -- above party or individuals.

Before going ahead they will need to broaden their organizational base against political hacks, has-beens and Negro-baiters attracted to the movement, and they will need to clarify in some manner the altogether muddy mandates of leadership in the several states. This is essential to preserve the integrity and promise of what the Baltimore Sun has called "the most dignified and intellectually honest political movement that has come out of the South in several generations".

Dignity and honesty in double measure would come to the Southern political rebels if Senator George of Georgia should determine to contribute more of the logic and leadership that he put into his great Constitutional argument in his Senate speech at the end of February. If Senator George were persuaded, he could perhaps do more than any other man to identify the coalition with the Constitutional cause that is greater than all its component parts. In this Senator's simple words:

> "The Federal Government did not create the states. On the contrary, the states created the Federal Government. They gave it all the power it has, except such power as has subsequently been given by the people . . ."

John Temple Graves, of Birmingham, is a recognized leader of Southern political thinking.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events Vol. VI, No. 19

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By Frank C. Hanighen May 11, 1949

TAFT AND TARIFFS: Senator Taft may be fighting his most important preliminary battle for re-election this week. His field of action, it is believed, will not be labor legislation (as commonly supposed) but the Reciprocal Trade Agreements. The periodic struggle over this piece of legislation is now regarded with a certain amount of sophistication by observers on the Hill. Many now realize how little the Act really promoted the professed objective of "free trade". (See NMG, January 26, April 20). As one farm legislator remarked, "It's like spitting through a fence to fertilize a field."

Senator Taft, of course, is well aware of a danger in the legislation, as well as its shortcomings. Accordingly, he is defending the right of Congress to receive reports from the Executive if and when reduction of tariffs begins to imperil American industry; in short, the principle of legislative review of Executive acts. Just at present the tariff is not a hot issue. But many economists, including the Senator (and he is certainly an economist of high ability) believe that it will be a big issue before another year is out. Indeed, it may prove a very live campaign question a year hence in the great manufacturing state of Ohio, when the Senator is mounting the hustings. There may even develop the surprising situation, in which Labor will be not so much interested in the Senator's record on labor legislation as anxious to protect industries against foreign competition. If this forecast is sound, the Senator's chances of re-election will sharply increase.

The reasons why the tariff issue may become important a year from now, both for Labor and employers, are not difficult to see. After the end of the war, American exporters met with little resistance and home industries had little to fear from tariff reductions, because European production was just struggling to its feet, and two great international exporting nations, Germany and Japan, were hors de combat. But, as time wore on, Britain, France and other Western nations began to battle for markets. And now our "crown colonies", Germany and Japan, are getting back into considerable production. Will not the global planners in Washington continue to insist on American tariff reductions as this situation broadens? And won't labor unions join with employers, particularly during a recession, in resisting tariff cuts? (Already, in the Waltham case, Labor links arms with the company executives in an attack on the tariff on imported watch movements.) All in all, the Ohio Senator's stand on the trade agreements may prove to be very smart politics.

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CAPITOL HILL: Congressman Wood, of Georgia, is more than the author of an unsuccessful Labor bill. He is also, although many have forgotten it, the Chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee. So great has been the lethargy of this body since its reform and reconstitution in January that jokers have dubbed it the "Dead Wood Committee". This epithet has apparently rankled, for during the past week a fresh cataract of revelations about subversives has been seeping -- or rather, was made to seep -- out of the Committee room to the press. Almost every reporter assigned to this beat has gone away with his own little exclusive sensation to print. There is not much doubt about the authenticity or importance of the recent disclosures, and evidently the Committee again has performed, however covertly, a public service. But the return of the Committee to the front pages has prompted sardonic comment. Will the Committee, so recently certified as dignified and "Constitutional", again become the whipping boy of the "liberal" columnists? Does this body remain incorrigible, although such "headline hunters" as Rankin and Parnell

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Thomas have been removed from its membership? And will Chairman Wood and Congressman Nixon (the most energetic and intelligent member) serve as targets for another "liberal" drive against the Committee?

- - - - Secretary of Agriculture Brannan is reported to be saying to his friends, ever so brightly, that his farm subsidy plan will be introduced "within sixty days". This word has circulated on Capitol Hill and has led to the conclusion that the famous Brannan Plan will not really go into the legislative machinery during this year's session. "Sixty days" means sometime in July and by that month the session will presumably be approaching its close. Brannan, however, may be counting on the President to call an extra session in the fall and by then a slump of farm prices would provide a more favorable atmosphere for his Utopian scheme.

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STATE SPENDING: With Adlai Stevenson, of Illinois, vying with Tom Dewey, of New York, for first place in the spending contest among Governors, it is natural to assume that every state budget this year will be a fearsome thing for the taxpayer. That is not precisely so. We have not canvassed every state capital, but we know there is one Governor whose course runs quite contrary to the general trend. Folks on Capitol Hill from the mountain states speak with awe of Governor J. Bracken Lee, of Utah. Mr. Lee, it seems, not only stood for election on an economy program but, by gosh, is actually sticking to his promises since becoming Governor. Utah people hasten to add, of course, that he's a sort of political accident. He was the only Republican elected in that state last November. The voters were awfully tired of Governor Maw, his opponent; running for his third term. Maw was a great and soulful dealer of public funds and patronage, but he stayed around the mansion too long.

If Utah voters wanted spending continued, but just desired a new face and did not believe what the new face said, then they had better realize that once in a while a candidate means what he says. Brack Lee was a bustling insurance man, elected mayor of his home town, then a defeated candidate for Governor in 1944, before finally attaining his goal in 1948. He is now making not only Democrats, but also many Republicans very angry. He has cut the budget many millions of dollars and has fired hundreds of state employees. He is lopping off a lot of gravy which the remaining employees have enjoyed, such as personal usage of state autos. The other day the Governor had an idea that the state could save $10,000 per annum by moving state social security offices to cheaper available space. He has also refused funds to continue the Salt Lake area vocational school, and seems bent on cutting other educational expenditures -- hardly a vote-getting policy.

These deeds of derring-do have been billed under the title of "efficiency". Lee's philosophy is that of running government as efficiently as a good business firm, although lately he seems to be doing some more fundamental thinking. Thus, according to the Salt Lake City Tribune (April 21), he cut the expanding educational program with the remark, "We must stop and take an inventory or we will destroy the type of government we now have." He may destroy his own political career, say case-hardened political observers. This economy program is all very well, they remark, but will he change his tune as the 1950 elections roll around? That will indeed prove a test, not only for Lee, but for the citizens of Utah, who with or without their eyes open voted for an economy candidate against a "spending" candidate.

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GERMANY: How will the United States "play it" in the developing diplomatic struggle over Germany? We have the impression that our high policy-makers really don't know; have as yet made no clear decision. The other evening, one of them asked us what might be an effective counterblow to the expected Soviet demand for removal of all

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occupation forces. Adjusting ourselves to the psychology of the questioner, we reminded him that Secretary of State Byrnes, at Stuttgart in 1946, suggested that Germany's eastern frontier was a matter for negotiation, and thereby both embarrassed Soviet Russia and gladdened German hearts. Last Sunday, Bevin tipped the British hand when he re-stated Byrnes' point.

The British have something. A Pole, in Washington, who is in close touch with conditions in his homeland, said to us: "The Poles know they have lost their independence and accept the situation gloomily, for the present. But what they will not accept is any alteration of their present boundary with Germany. For, in the German territory now in Polish hands lies the very living of Poland. Every friend I ever had in Warsaw is now in rich Silesia. Eastern Poland has been taken away. If the new western territory goes, our country cannot possibly exist physically and every Pole knows it. If the feeling grows in Poland that Silesia will be returned to Germany, our people will become desperate. The least that will happen will be a tremendous growth of Tito-ism; at the most, underground revolt." Our Polish friend assumes that Russia will play a pro-German game henceforth. And if the Western Powers talk of territorial readjustment in the East, they will force the Russians' hand. Thus Russia is bound to have trouble in Eastern Europe.

Yet, effective as this way of "playing it" may prove (for the West), we wonder why policy-makers here do not employ something else, more sound, probably more effective. We mean the proposal for a United States of Europe. The Germans in their new Constitution show how favorable they are to this approach. They have specifically written into the document provisions for integration of their State into a European federation. Why does not Washington take advantage of a project which could find ready response in Germany and the rest of the Continent?

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SELLING AMERICA: Several large firms are planning advertising campaigns to "sell" the American way of life to people in foreign countries, according to the New York Times, May 9. Leading companies in the automotive, radio, pharmaceutical and industrial equipment fields are reported to be participating. These firms will be doing well if their material proves as striking and persuasive as a brochure just gotten out by the U. S. Labor Department. It is entitled, The Gift of Freedom, a Study of the Economic and Social Status of Wage Earners in the United States. No breast-beating about abuses in this country, nor deployment of the "class-struggle" line, which some labor unions propagate in their literature, mars the copy and art. On the contrary, the pamphlet is replete with illustrations which give concrete evidence of the privileges and high standard of living which the American worker enjoys. We were particularly impressed by some vivid photos of grocery counters, with price tags marking various produce, and of the modern interiors of workers' houses. One can imagine the salutary effect of such a document should it reach the hands of foreign wage earners whose knowledge of the United States has been warped by Cominform propaganda. American firms could do worse than purchase thousands of copies of The Gift of Freedom for distribution abroad; it would be good psychology for corporations to disseminate a publication of Labor, and it might prove an economy for their advertising budget.

Incidentally, we learn to our surprise that only a few thousand copies of this brochure have been distributed. Why the Voice of America has not put out large foreign-language editions passeth understanding; nor is it comprehensible that other agencies have not utilized it for domestic distribution. Certainly, The Gift of Freedom would offer a much fairer picture of conditions in the U. S. than that Leftist-slanted document, Fascism in Action, prepared by the Library of Congress. It is indeed astonishing that Congress has authorized a printing of this running into six figures, while The Gift of Freedom languishes with a paltry stock.

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Book Events

Nutrition and the Soil, by Dr. Lionel James Picton. New York: The Devin-Adair Company. $4.00. Reviewed by J. M. Lalley.

Here we have another attack on the quantitative fallacy introduced by the Industrial Revolution and propagated by the progressive divisions and redivisions of Labor. Just as men may be the poorer in having more things, so they may be the worse fed in having seemingly more to eat. Dr. Picton, who explains this paradox, is an eminent country practitioner of Cheshire, and his study of the relationship of food production and public health appears to have covered more than half a century. All his observations and conclusions affirm the principles of the school of land husbandry known as the organic farming movement, which is in part a rationalization of mediaeval practice and in part an adaption of the immemorial methods of Chinese and Indian peasants. The cardinal principle is that all organic substances taken from the soil must be returned to it, if it is not to be enervated and eventually destroyed. In other words the soil, by which is meant merely the superficial and cultivable layer of earth, is, like the plants which grow upon it and the animals which subsist upon them, a living organism. It must, therefore, be fed by what it feeds. Thus in an ideal economy, where the site of production and consumption are the same, nothing is wasted; for life moves in an unbroken cycle of growth, dissolution and renewal, and earth, plant, insect, beast and man are united in the common rhythm of nature. In this context the words of the Lenten ritual, Memento, homo, quia pulvis est, et in pulverem reverteris, acquire another and less desolating import. Dr. Picton goes so far as to praise the practice of superficial burial, in which the bodily tissues of the dead, instead of putrifying, as they do in deep-dug graves, revitalize the soil by nitrification.

This natural rhythm of growth, decay and regrowth is broken in the large scale market agriculture that necessarily accompanies the rise of great urban industrial centers, and in the cash-crop plantation that follows the development of distant trade. In this way, the life-restoring residues, instead of returning to the soil, disappear daily down millions of household drains into the sewers and thence into the sea to join the topsoils squandered through preventable erosions. It is part of the doctrine that what is thus lost cannot be restored by artificial means, which is to say by chemical fertilization. Wherever the yield of an area has been increased artificially or the quality of the produce improved, it has been, Dr. Picton insists, at the expense of the soil and of subsequent crops. The error, I gather, is in conceiving the growth of plants as a purely chemical process; for it is really a biological process in which the earthworms destroyed by artificial fertilization have an important part. Humus, or organic soil, can be preserved or recreated only by organic fertilization, that is by composts of decayed vegetation and animal wastes, thus assuring the proper nutriment of plants and permitting fungi and insects to play creative rather than destructive roles. For, according to the organic theory, the prevalence of plant and cattle diseases is not an indication of an unusual vigor in the pests but of the lack of it in the vegetation, and hence also in the beasts that are fed with the undernourished crops and in the men and women and children who must live upon both plants and beasts.

Thus in Dr. Picton's view the problems of agriculture and of preventative medicine are in the long run identical. The nutritional deficiencies of modern humanity are, however, further complicated by the dietary habits encouraged by urban life and by various food processing methods, such as the pasturization of milk and the fine milling of flour. In contrast to such Malthusians as the Messrs. Osborne and Vogt, Dr. Picton perceives among the consequences of a lifelong malnutrition, which begins with the artifical feeding of babies, an increasingly sterile population.

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